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ABSTRACT

Although the Nebraska gubernatorial race was the first statewide race in which both candidates were women, women's issues were seldom raised--even though both candidates thought the women's movement had helped to make their previous campaigns successful. Because each candidate opposed abortion, neither was endorsed by any of the major women's organizations. Both Kay Orr (Republican) and Helen Boosalis (Democrat) were politically experienced nominees who won decisively in their respective primaries and were considered highly competent by the traditionally conservative Nebraska voters. The Republican camp lost no time in trying to brand the moderate Boosalis a liberal--a charge she denied. Polls usually showed the candidates nearly even, although a greater percentage of men favored Orr while more women polled chose Boosalis. In the early stages of the race, the important issues seemed to be agriculture and its impact on the economy, education, and the role of state government. Economic issues dominated the latter part of the campaign, with the probable increase in state taxes becoming the single most important concern. In three televised debates between the candidates, neither candidate made any serious mistakes, but Orr was seen as more organized and direct with her answers. The Republican Orr was the eventual winner in an election that differed minimally from a typical race between two male candidates--the dominant issue turned out to be the voter's pocketbook. (Extensive notes are appended.) (NKA)

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Non-Traditional Tradition in the Heartland: Women's Choices in the Nebraska Gubernatorial Campaign

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Despite the claim of one disgruntled loser in the Republican primary that "Jeremiah plainly tells us that when the people of a nation are willing to accept the leadership of a woman, it is a sure sign of God's curse,"[2] and despite a potential write-in candidate's observation that the state was conducting a "prom queen contest,"[3] and despite a lobbyist's statement that large corporations might be reluctant "coming to a state with a woman governor,"[4] no male stepped forward as savior--and Nebraska elected Kay Orr as the first female Republican governor in the United States on November 4, 1986. The Nebraska gubernatorial race was also the first statewide race in which both candidates were women, and may therefore prove instructive to rhetorical scholars who wish to understand the ways in which women might campaign when not faced with the "gender question" usually raised in male-female races. Study of this race may also enable us to identify differences and similarities between male and female campaigners. The current study will focus on the former question by tracing the development of issues in the campaign and by suggesting directions for further research on women's political campaigns. The latter question is appropriate for future study.

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Nebraska and Women

From 1866 to 1982, five women ran for governor in Nebraska. In 1986 alone, five women ran for governor.[5] In the May 13th primary, each of the two major parties selected a woman to represent it in the November election; Kay Orr beat out seven other Republican hopefuls and Helen Boosalis was selected over six other Democratic candidates for the nomination.[6] It would be exciting for feminists to think that here, at long last, would be a campaign where women's issues could be thoroughly discussed, a campaign where specific and detailed goals for ensuring equality and opportunity for women would be explained, a campaign which would guarantee that state legislators would have to concern themselves with all citizens, not just with male citizens. Not so. Education, farming, and the candidates' experience dominated the primary campaign--women's issues were seldom raised,[7] even though both candidates thought the women's movement had helped make their successful campaigns possible.[8] The candidates took slightly different positions on abortion, Orr claiming to be adamantly pro-life and Boosalis favoring abortion only in the cases of rape, incest, or to protect the mother's life; and they took opposite sides on the Equal Rights Amendment, Orr opposing it and Boosalis favoring it.[9] Because each candidate opposed abortion, none of the major women's organizations, including the National Organization for Women, the National Women's Political Caucus, or the Women's Campaign Fund, endorsed either candidate.[10] Thus, not only did both candidates avoid discussing

"women's issues," but they also lacked organized support from feminists--conversely, they also avoided open opposition from anti-feminist groups.

Critics noted that Orr and Boosalis undoubtedly had the best credentials of any candidate in their respective races. Orr, 47 years old, was appointed state treasurer in 1981 and then became the first woman elected to statewide office when she ran for the same office in 1982;[11] she continued to serve as treasurer while she ran her gubernatorial campaign.[12] Boosalis, 66 years old, served as mayor of Lincoln for eight years, from 1975 to 1983. As such, she was the second female chief executive of an American city with a population over 100,000;[13] in 1981-82 she was the first woman president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. She was appointed director of the Nebraska Department of Aging in 1983.[14]

The selection of two women candidates to run for such an office may be more significant in demonstrating the current state of affairs nationally concerning women's candidacies than in telling us something significant about Nebraska, observers note. Nebraska just did not seem to be very excited about the prospect of a two-woman race or the certainty of a woman governor. "We are a conservative state," observed Nellie Yost of the Nebraska State Historical Society. "I don't see that this changes our conservatism at all. If these two women seem to have the best ideas for bringing the state out of its financial difficulties, then that's just the way we are." She added, "we vote for what's best for Nebraska and ourselves."[15] Nebraska had attempted to

rescind its ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and was viewed as a generally conservative state. Yet, here it had decided it wanted one of two women for its governor. Those outside the state believed this made no sense. Yet, Lynn Cutler, the vice chair of the Democratic National Committee, noted that "the Midwest is great about women" and added that "there is a tradition in the Midwest of men and women working together. That is what farming is all about."[16] Those who followed Nebraska politics more closely noted that competent women had been gaining more and more power in Nebraska, in part aided by "modern governors" who had "helped with their appointment powers" and by Virginia Smith's skilled representation of Nebraska in the U.S. House of Representatives. Thus, women had gradually increased their power and competence until they had reached the point where Nebraska voters would find it unremarkable to assume that a woman would be as competent--and in the case of comparison with primary opponents, more competent--as any man. ". . . [I]t is now comfortably possible to oppose a woman office seeker competing against a better qualified male opponent," claimed one political observer, "without running the legitimate risk of being sexist." In other words, he continued, "we're approaching the time when it'll be nearly as safe for the female candidate to be as incompetent as the male."[17] This was not to suggest, however, that the author thought either candidate was incompetent--quite the contrary. Orr herself thought that the significance of the race lay not in the fact that Nebraska could elect the first

Republican woman, but that her victory would "strengthen the party nationally" and give the Republican Party an opportunity to regain "its prominence in Nebraska politics."[18] Certainly the national Republican Party saw an opportunity in Nebraska, evidenced by the parade of Party luminaries who campaigned for Orr: President Ronald Reagan, Vice President George Bush, Senator Robert Dole, Representative Jack Kemp, Secretary of Transportation Elizabeth Dole, Indiana Governor Robert Orr, and former Delaware Governor Pierre du Pont IV. The Democrats did not have an incumbent President to call on, but countered with Representative Richard Gephardt, Senator Bill Bradley, Kentucky Governor Martha Layne Collins, Senator Gary Hart, and of course, Governor Bob Kerrey. In the long run, both candidates claimed, surrogates would not make much of a difference--the voters would make up their own minds based on what the candidates said.[19]

Conservatism in Politics

Nebraskans traditionally vote for Republican presidents and Nebraska is traditionally a conservative state; since 1936 the only Democrat they have supported was Lyndon Johnson in 1964. However, in 1982 Nebraskans elected a Democratic governor and returned Democrats to the U.S. Senate in 1982 and 1984.[20] Despite that, Nebraska had approximately 363,000 registered Democrats, 436,000 registered Republicans, and 57,000 registered Independents in 1986.[21] Given the state's historical tendencies, Orr "immediately [became] the bettor's choice." She was the "certified champion of the state's largest political party" and

she could "tap into great national support . . . beginning with President Reagan." On the other hand, Boosalis "showed a statewide strength" and "easily . . . vanquished a pair of attractive male opponents."[22] Two days after the primary, Democratic party officials were already attempting to portray Boosalis as a conservative or, at the very least, a moderate. In response to the Republican Party's claim that she practiced a "liberal, special-interest politics" in contrast to Orr's "conservative and economic growth philosophy," the Nebraska Democratic Party chair observed, "if the Republicans think they are going to be successful in branding Helen Boosalis as a liberal, they are mistaken."[23]

Despite the logic that suggests Orr would have the edge over Boosalis in the early part of the campaign, a poll taken two days before the primary gave Boosalis nineteen percent support, putting her first in a field of the top nine primary contenders, and gave Orr ten percent support, putting her fourth in the same field; the poll showed twenty-eight percent of the voters were undecided.[24] The next poll after the primary, conducted for the Boosalis campaign, showed both candidates "dead even" with each receiving forty-three percent support for those polled with fourteen percent of those questioned undecided. Interesting, the poll also noted that each candidate had an eighty-three percent name recognition rating and an approval rating of fifty-six percent from those questioned. At that point, Boosalis was drawing slightly more support from Republican voters than Orr was

from Democratic voters.[25] A month and a half later, a newspaper poll indicated the two candidates were still "neck and neck," although the percentage of support for each had dropped from what previous polls had indicated. Boosalis was shown to have 37.8 percent support while Orr received 37.4 percent support, with 24.8 percent of the voters undecided. This was the first poll released to include information about gender preference differences. Men favored Orr by forty-four percent but favored Boosalis by only thirty-four percent while forty-two percent of the women polled favored Boosalis and only thirty-one percent favored Orr. Interestingly, older citizens favored the younger candidate (Orr) and younger citizens favored the older candidate (Boosalis).[26] Later polls indicate that this early "gender gap" remained, and might be one of the more remarkable points to be made about the campaign.

Emergence of the Tax Issue

In the early stages of the regular campaign, Orr promised to avoid personal attacks on her opponent. She wanted to run a "positive campaign" based on "abiding confidence in the strength of Nebraskans." Although the Republican promised to examine her opponent's record closely, she felt "the contrast will be up to the judgment of the people" because she did not intend "to draw that contrast, if there is one." Rather, Orr intended to focus on plans for her governorship, which included specific attention to the quality of education and an assurance of jobs for graduates.[27] Boosalis, too, expressed her intention to run a

"positive campaign," saying that Nebraskans could "choose a candidate who promises, or . . . choose a candidate who promises and who has delivered." She wanted to concentrate on "opportunities for farmers." This was a reference to Orr's support for Initiative 300, which was a repeal of constitutional restrictions on corporate farming. Boosalis believed that the repeal would mean "surrendering to out-of-state corporations."[28] She believed that in addition to agriculture, the issues in the race would center around economic development, education, and the role of state government.[29] Both candidates were correct in their assessment of what issues would most concern the voters.

In the early stages of the race, the important issues seemed to be agriculture and related economic issues, education, and the role of state government, although some observers thought the campaign's major issue would turn out to be taxes because of a comment Boosalis had made in an August speech. She had said she planned to "work with the Unicameral to fulfill the promise made to Nebraskans in the 1960s to have one-third of our taxes from the property tax, one-third from the sales tax and one-third from the income tax." The Omaha paper concluded this meant she was calling for a "60 percent increase in the state sales tax rate and a 40 percent increase in the income tax rate." Boosalis denied that, of course, because few politicians want to say taxes should be increased, and attempted to clarify her position that the equalization of taxes would provide tax relief to property owners.[30]

This was a position she maintained throughout the balance of the campaign, but Orr took advantage of the newspaper's claim immediately[31] and released a commercial in late August which showed a red line representing the sales tax and a gold line representing the income tax rising to fill the screen while a voice-over told the viewers Boosalis wanted to raise their taxes. As a counterpoint, Orr was then seen in the commercial apparently comforting an elderly woman.[32] This particular ad became very important in the campaign. Soon after its release, Boosalis released one of her own claiming that Orr's "false TV ad wants you to believe Helen Boosalis is for raising taxes. That's not true." Helen Boosalis, it said, "is against raising taxes, and the record proves it again and again." The Boosalis campaign staff claimed that the Orr ad represented "a campaign that's distorting the truth" and "negative campaigning," while the Orr staff countered that it was not a "negative ad or a negative campaign at all" but rather that they were running a "campaign on the issues."[33] One observer noted that "if Orr wins my secret opinion is that this one commercial will be the reason,"[34] although one newspaper headline read "Nebraska taxes will rise no matter who is elected."[35] By this point in the campaign, and until its end, the "tax issue" resembled a name-calling contest. Orr would accuse Boosalis of supporting a tax hike, and Boosalis would counter by saying that Orr had distorted the record. An editorialist claimed that Boosalis's vision of tax equalization among the three areas had "taken on a life of its own" and had

"furnished raw meat" for Orr. "Politics may be more civilized now than in the state's frontier past, but it still ain't beanbags," he continued, and "all of Boosalis' assertions that the ad distorts and misrepresents her position are not likely to quiet the hard-ball Republican opposition." The Republican strategy to attack the Democrat's claim also meant that Orr "generally escapes being probed about her own tax policy assertions," which was "a great campaign spot to be in."[36]

The next poll taken after release of Orr's ad (Boosalis's ad was not shown until after the survey) showed Orr with an eleven point lead over Boosalis, with Orr receiving forty-four percent of the support from those surveyed, Boosalis receiving thirty-three percent of the support, and twenty-three percent of the voters undecided. This poll showed Orr as stronger among Democrats than Boosalis was among Republicans, Orr as stronger among both men and women, and Orr as stronger among both younger and older voters--all of which results were in contrast to the earlier poll mentioned above.[37] The Boosalis campaign reported a poll a week after she released her television response to Orr's tax accusations which showed Orr with only a four-point lead over Boosalis. Orr was shown to have forty-six percent support among voters while Boosalis had forty-two percent support, with twelve percent undecided. The shift in attitude was attributed to the new advertisement.[38]

Other Campaign Strategies

A poll released in August by Orr's campaign indicated that

voters were interested primarily in job-related issues, economic development, agriculture, and taxes.[39] She took advantage of this information in the four television commercials she had released by September which dealt, one each, with education, farm opportunities, the governor's office, and the attack on Boosalis claiming the Democrat favored raising taxes, mentioned earlier.[40] Boosalis also ran four ads, one of which responded to the "tax increase attack;" the other three were not as specifically focused as Orr's, although they addressed leadership, business and the economy, and agriculture.[41] In the early stages of the campaign, Orr's strategy was "geared toward building an organization" rather than a great deal of public visibility, so she intended to stay "low key" until Labor Day. In contrast, Boosalis saw no reason to wait to make sure "people [understood] her positions."[42] Neither seemed afraid to appear with the other and they agreed early to debate, discussing the possibility of up to six debates[43] but later agreeing to three, one in each of the Congressional districts. The first debate was scheduled for September 4 at the Nebraska State Fair, the second on September 21 in North Platte, and the third on October 6 in Omaha.[44] While three debates in one month might seem unusual, both candidates could only gain from the additional television exposure and really had nothing to lose as they were not incumbents.

The Debates

In the first debate, Orr and Boosalis focused on issues which had already been raised in the campaign. These included

farm issues, education and its funding, and tax increases.[45] This was a debate in which "neither candidate made any big mistakes," and which one observer labelled a "ho-hum affair,"[46] while another said that there was no "clear winner."[47] But it certainly offered the opportunity for each candidate to explain her positions in a forum where the other candidate would have to respond directly. It also provided a situation where issues would begin to crystallize both for the voters and as focal points for the balance of the campaign.

The second debate "highlight[ed] differences" between the two candidates,[48] as each vied for title of "fiscal conservative."[49] The basic issues remained the same as in the first debate--agriculture, education, leadership, and taxes. In this debate, Boosalis repeatedly mentioned her successful experience as the eight-year mayor of Lincoln, while Orr stressed her experience in dealing with the state's budget as treasurer, each in an attempt to prove she was the more experienced candidate. Orr tried to show that city taxes had gone up in Lincoln while Boosalis was mayor and Boosalis referred to the "Thone-Orr" administration in an attempt to link Orr with attempts to raise taxes and increase deficits during the Republican administration prior to the current Democratic Kerrey administration.[50] It can be said that, again, neither candidate made any serious mistakes, although a cursory examination of the debate suggests that, of the two, Orr was more organized and direct with her answers.

The third debate was similar to the previous two, in that the issues remained the same, and the candidates took every opportunity to re-state their positions on the issues. By this point, Governor Kerrey had announced that there might be a $50 million budget-revenue gap in 1987,[51] which made it much more difficult for the two candidates to maintain their "no tax increase" positions. However, they certainly tried. While each candidate focused on the same issues, agriculture, education, leadership, and taxes, each attempted to link all four issues with her skills as a "proven" leader. There was also a stronger focus on what each opponent had done wrong in the past as well as a stronger sense of why the viewer should not vote for the opponent as well as why the viewer should vote for the proponent. Orr accused Boosalis of having presided over Lincoln during a time when 1509 jobs were lost, while Boosalis countered by claiming that, in fact, 3100 manufacturing jobs had been created. In the second debate, Orr had labelled the jobs Boosalis had claimed to create "government jobs" as opposed to "real jobs"--jobs which came from the private sector. Nebraska needed "real jobs" and not the other type; Boosalis did not make the same distinction but she claimed the jobs were not government jobs.[52] Once again, neither candidate erred significantly, but the third debate certainly highlighted one of the major differences between the two candidates--Boosalis's perception of the proper role of government as an activist government and Orr's belief that the private sector was important in assisting Nebraska to recover

from its economic problems. Their positions on the essential issues had not changed, and apparently were not likely to change before election day.

Polls released just before election day were not consistent, although it is interesting to note that the Lincoln polls consistently showed Boosalis ahead throughout the campaign, while the Omaha polls put Orr in the front. A week before the election, one survey showed Orr in front by three points, giving her forty-three percent of the total while Boosalis was given forty percent, and seventeen percent were undecided.[53] The day before the election, another poll gave Boosalis a one-point lead over Orr, with forty-four and forty-three percent respectively, and thirteen percent of those surveyed claiming that they were undecided.[54] Taken together, it was fairly clear that the race was very close--some said too close to call. The voter turnout had been optimistically predicted at seventy-five percent of the registered voters, but post-election results indicate that sixty-nine percent had actually voted.[55] Still, that put the turnout at seventh in the nation, with 47.3 percent of the eligible voters exercising their right.[56] Kay Orr, the Republican, won fifty-three percent of the vote, while Helen Boosalis, the Democrat, won forty-seven percent of the vote.[57] The results would seem to indicate that the race was never close, but in fact, every poll taken indicated that a significant number of voters claimed to be uncertain of how they wanted to vote until Election Day. In any case, Kay Orr was pleased to take her place

in history as the first female Republican governor in the United States.

Discussion and Implications

What can be learned from a study of a two-woman political race? The answer might become clear by examining the race both from the standpoint of what happened and what did not happen.

Each of the two major political parties in Nebraska nominated a woman to represent it in the general election. This remarkable circumstance occurred through the regular party primaries when voters were offered a wide variety and a large number of choices. This may suggest that the choice was so wide that the voters did not clearly agree on any one candidate. An examination of the primary results, however, shows this was not the case. Both Orr and Boosalis emerged as clear victors from their primary races. The voters' satisfaction with their choices into the general election is further indicated by the lack of notice they took concerning their candidates' sex. A close reading of the two major newspapers in the state indicates no general dissatisfaction with either Orr or Boosalis. On the contrary, voters and journalists alike seemed singularly impressed with the outstanding qualifications of the two women they chose. So it seems as if here was a case where the voters chose the two candidates they thought most qualified, and the two candidates just happened to be women.

What did not happen? Women's issues were never seriously discussed. Instead, the two candidates talked about the exact

same issues that any two gubernatorial candidates from a farming state or from the Midwest might be expected to address: agriculture, leadership, and taxes. The fourth issue that dominated the campaign, education, did so for a couple of reasons. The first is that Nebraska was grappling with the need to consolidate its school districts because of declining school enrollment and the possibility of declining services due to funding. The proposal to deal with this problem included a penny increase in the state sales tax, and so support (or opposition) for it became linked to the issue of raising (or not raising) taxes. The second reason that education was addressed so thoroughly is probably accounted for because, in general, most states were coming to grips with the need to improve education in order to attract projects which could aid each state's economic development--and Nebraska was no different. Yet, this issue, too, became tied to the economy.

Thus, not surprisingly given the general national concern for the past six years, the Nebraska gubernatorial campaign was dominated by the economy--or the voter's pocketbook. Women are as concerned with the economy as men are, so most feminists and women's rights advocates contend.[58] So it is not really surprising that in a time of national concern for an increasing tax burden and a rising deficit, voters (and therefore candidates) would be most concerned with how they could deal with money matters.

Rhetorical scholars interested in women's political communication have a number of interesting directions to take, now

that we have some data on races in which both candidates are women. Comparison of this race with the 1986 Maryland Senate race and the 1982 Nevada Congressional race should yield some generic guidelines as to how we might expect women's races to be run when they are not forced into discussing the "gender question." We might be able to pinpoint the kinds of issues with which women are most concerned and/or conclude that men and women are concerned with the same issues. A second area of research is to explore the gender gap which emerged in the Nebraska race. Political observers first noted emergence of the gender gap in the 1980 presidential race and then saw it emerge more strongly in the 1982 congressional races. At the time, it was believed that the gender gap had more to do with personal approval of Ronald Reagan than with anything else. However, if gender gaps arise in other two-female races, we might want to consider exploring the possibility that it is linked to party preference or the issues with which a particular party seems to be most concerned. A third area worth exploring concerns the possible differences and/or similarities in the ways men and women conduct political campaigns. Free of the plaguing issue and terminology of "sexism" so often raised in male-female campaigns (which often obscures the more important question of competence), we might be able to pinpoint the ways that men and/or women would run campaigns if they were free to choose.

A fourth and final area worth exploring concerns joint appearances by political candidates. In comparison with other

"joint appearances by political candidates," both of these women answered questions more directly and succinctly than most and in that sense, viewers may have learned more about their respective positions than they have learned from other politicians. This type of judgment would certainly need further evidence in order for scholars to draw valid conclusions. However, the constant criticism levelled at political "debates" we have seen in the past twenty-five years and the cynicism developed toward them demands that we not simply assume women will debate exactly like men, even if the circumstances are similar, even though this study seems to indicate that men and women will run their campaigns in similar fashions.

1. I wish to thank Mary Cook of Council Bluffs, Iowa for the work that she did in helping me prepare this paper. Mary clipped newspapers from Omaha and Council Bluffs and provided a 1.valuable running commentary on the election. I also wish to thank Dr. Jack Kay from the University of Nebraska for providing me a videotape of the second and third Orr-Boosalis debates as well as the Orr "tax" TV advertisement.

2. "Sileven: Nominees are God's Curse," Lincoln Journal, 24 July 1986, p. 9.

3. "DeCamp Says Race for Governor has Become a Prom Queen Contest," Lincoln Journal, 16 June 1986, p. 10.

4. C. David Kotok, "Lobbyist: Woman Governor Carries Risk," Omaha World-Herald, 18 September 1986, p. 18.

5. Kathleen Rutledge, "Some Facts to Ponder," Sunday Journal-Star [Lincoln, Nebraska], 11 May 1986, Sec. E, p. 10.

6. T.R. Reid, "Women Likely to Lead Both Tickets in Nebraska," Washington Post, 12 May 1986, Sec. A, p. 4.

7. Michael Doan and Michael Bosc, "Woman Power on the Prairie," U.S. News and World Report, 26 May 1986, p. 8.

8. Ellen Hume, "Race of Two Women for Nebraska Governorship is Viewed as Start of Post-Feminist Political Era," Wall Street Journal, 3 September 1986, p. 58.

9. However, as a Republican national platform committee representative, Orr claimed a "middle-ground stance" on abortion, saying, "I do not believe in wholesale abortion, but I do believe the decision should be made between a doctor and his patient." Orr had also originally supported the ERA, but after Nebraska ratified it in 1972, she worked in support of rescission, earning her the wrath of the National Organization for Women. See Kathleen Rutledge, "Women's Issues Not Seen in Race," Sunday Journal-Star [Lincoln, Nebraska], 31 August 1986, Sec. B, p. 2.

10. Robin Toner, "2 Women in a Close Nebraska Race," New York Times, 16 September 1986, Sec. A, p. 12.

11. Hume, "Race of Two Women for Nebraska Governorship," p. 58.

12. This angered opponents, who repeatedly called for Orr to resign her position during the campaign. The Lincoln Journal and the Lincoln Sunday Journal-Star were filled with letters to the editor and repeated editorials urging Orr to resign. She never did because she claimed she could both run a campaign and do her job without either interfering with the other.

13. Nearly all of the publicity immediately following the primary mentioned Boosalis's status as the first woman elected chief executive of an American city with a population over 100,000. Several days after the primary it was noted that Dorothy Lee was elected mayor of Portland, Oregon in 1948, making

Boosalis the second woman to serve in that position. See "Lee, Not Boosalis, Achieved First in Mayor Category," Lincoln Journal, 17 May 1986, p. 14.

14. Doan and Bosc, p. 8.

15. Fred Knapp and Kathleen Rutledge, "Boosalis, Orr Write National History," Lincoln Journal, 14 May 1986, p. 1.

16. "State Gubernatorial Race Attracts National Interest," Lincoln Journal, 19 May 1986, p. 9.

17. Dick Herman, "Tracing Road to Electoral History," Lincoln Journal, 19 May 1986, p. 6.

18. "Orr Says Election is Historic Chance for State's GOP," Lincoln Journal, 4 June 1986, p. 15.

19. C. David Kotok, "Stars Come Out in Race for Governor," Sunday World-Herald [Omaha, Nebraska], 28 September 1986, Sec. B, p. 1, 4.

20. C. David Kotok, "Nebraska: A Singular State for Genderless Politics," Los Angeles Times, 25 May 1986, Sec. Five, p. 5.

21. Fred Knapp, "Political Candidates Stalking Voters," Sunday Journal-Star [Lincoln, Nebraska], 11 May 1986, Sec. B, p. 1.

22. "There is No Place Like...," Editorial, Lincoln Journal, 14 May 1986, p. 9.

23. Kathleen Rutledge, "Party Chairmen Draw Gubernatorial Battle Lines," Lincoln Journal, 15 May 1986, p. 1.

24. Kathleen Rutledge, "Boosalis Gains, GOP Race Tightens," Sunday Journal-Star [Lincoln, Nebraska], 11 May 1986, Sec. A, p. 7.

25. Kathleen Rutledge, "Poll Shows Boosalis, Orr Enjoy Equal Support," Lincoln Journal, 28 June 1986, p. 14.

26. Fred Knapp, "Race for Governor Said Neck and Neck," Sunday Journal-Star [Lincoln, Nebraska], 17 August 1986, Sec. A, p. 1; Sec. B, p. 1.

27. Kathleen Rutledge, "Orr Tells State's GOP Tax Action Needed Soon," Lincoln Journal, 21 June 1986, p. 13.

28. Fred Knapp, "Demos Said Offering 'Visions and Ideas,'" Lincoln Journal, 28 June 1986, p. 6.

29. Fred Knapp, "Boosalis Lining Up Issues for Fall Race," Lincoln Journal, 14 May 1986, p. 1.

30. "Boosalis, Orr Expected to Drop Taxes for Other Issues," Omaha World-Herald, 16 September 1986, p. 13.

31. Rutledge, "Women's Issues Not Seen in Race," Sec. B, p. 2.

32. Orr television advertisement, Videotaped by Jack Kay, 6 October 1986.

33. Fred Knapp, "Boosalis Says Orr Misleadling [sic] Public on Tax-Raise Issue," Lincoln Journal, 12 September 1986, p. 14.

34. Letter received from Mary Cook, 29 September 1986.

35. "Nebraska Taxes Will Rise No Matter Who Is Elected," Editorial, Omaha World-Herald, 8 September 1986, p. 28.

36. "'No Tax Increases' Means What? Dollars, or Tax Rates?" Editorial, Lincoln Journal, 17 September 1986, p. 10.

37. C. David Kotok, "Mrs. Orr Led Mrs. Boosalis By 11 Points in W-H Poll," Sunday World-Herald [Omaha, Nebraska], 14 September 1986, Sec. A, p. 1.

38. "Sept. 14-15 Poll Shows Orr Ahead 46% to 42%," Lincoln Journal, 1 October 1986, p. 22.

39. "Orr Backers Mum on Report Candidate Trailing Boosalis," Lincoln Journal, 5 August 1986, p. 14.

40. "Orr Opens Headquarters in Douglas County," Lincoln Journal, 28 August 1986, p. 16.

41. Fred Knapp, "Orr, Boosalis TV Political Ads Watched, Evaluated, Debated," Sunday Journal-Star [Lincoln, Nebraska], 14 September 1986, Sec. B, p. 7.

42. "Boosalis Takes Campaign on the Road While Orr Has Kept a Lower Profile," Lincoln Journal, 18 August 1986, p. 10.

43. "Boosalis, Orr Discuss Schedule for Debates," Lincoln Journal, 8 July 1986, p. 11.

44. "Boosalis, Orr Plan Debates in 3 Districts," Lincoln Journal, 30 August 1986, p. 3.

45. Kathleen Rutledge, "Boosalis, Orr Renew Familiar Themes," Lincoln Journal, 4 September 1986, p. 1, 16.

46. Kathleen Rutledge, "No Fireworks Set Off in State Fair Debate," Sunday Journal-Star [Lincoln, Nebraska], 7 September 1986, Sec. B, p. 2. Given the historic nature of the debate, there was remarkably little newspaper coverage of the candidates and the issues raised. This certainly highlights Nebraskans' attitude that this race was nothing about which to get excited.

47. C. David Kotok, "Who Won Debate? Orr, Boosalis Backers Both Happy," Omaha World-Herald, 5 September 1986, n. pag.

48. Fred Knapp, "Orr-Boosalis Debate Highlights Differences," Lincoln Journal, 22 September 1986, p. 1.

49. A viewing of the debate videotape indicates that Orr first claimed the title in her opening statement, Boosalis denied it in her response to the second question, and then claimed the title for herself. Clearly, this was an attempt by both candidates to win support from taxpayers--the label "fiscal conservative" suggests someone who will not raise taxes; by this point in the campaign, taxes could be considered the key issue, and it was important to be the candidate who could prove she would not raise taxes. Second Orr-Boosalis Debate, Videotaped by Jack Kay, 21 September 1986.

50. Second Orr-Boosalis Debate, Videotaped by Jack Kay, 21 September 1986.

51. Gabriella Stern, "Responses Vary to Call for Trims in Funding," Sunday World-Herald [Omaha, Nebraska], 5 October 1986, Sec. B, p. 1.

52. Second Orr-Boosalis Debate, Videotaped by Jack Kay, 21 September 1986; and Third Orr-Boosalis Debate, Videotaped by Jack Kay, 6 October 1986. See also Fred Knapp, "Boosalis and Orr Conclude Debates," Lincoln Journal, 7 October 1986, p. 1.

53. "Poll: Governor's Race Close," Sunday Journal-Star [Lincoln, Nebraska], 26 October 1986, n. pag.

54. "Boosalis Campaign Sees Momentum; Orr Backers Say No Shift has Occurred," Lincoln Journal, 3 November 1986, p. 14.

55. "Vote Total Takes Shot at Record; Douglas 67 Pct.," Omaha World-Herald, Late Ed., 5 November 1986, p. 4.

56. Cate Peterson, "Voter Turnout in Nebraska 7th in the Nation," Omaha World-Herald, 14 November 1986, p. 42.

57. "Totals," Lincoln Journal, 5 November 1986, p. 1.

58. Examine any feminist rhetoric toward the end of the ERA campaign, and you will find extensive arguments claiming that the amendment was necessary for women's economic survival. You will also find thorough discussion of economic measures which the movement intended to address if and when the ERA was defeated. By shifting into "economic" issues rather than "women's" issues, movement leaders hoped to retain allegiance of movement supporters. Whether or not this support remained, and whether or not supporters shifted their efforts into economic issues, remains to be judged. But there is no disputing the existence of the arguments and the obvious concern for economic matters.